



Lunar Tide

a homestuck highbloods fanzine

highbloodzine.tumblr.com







Pisces Road Trip

The Handmaid will enlist the Condesce, extending the same bargain once offered to her. It will be the sort involving neither negotiation nor the possibility of refusal, expressed in terms plainly understood by the psychotically genocidal. The Condesce will serve as her new master's witch, carrying out—

I am very sorry, was I not clear? I said "the sort involving neither negotiation nor the possibility of refusal." It is quite impossible for the Condesce to say,

MEENAH: oh no beach youre not lurin me in that easy

MEENAH: you think i dont know who you are

MEENAH: youve been makin waves in my empire for millennia

MEENAH: i know you

This is most irregular. The Condesce should not be capable of speaking to the Handmaid. Such divergences from the plot only happen in doomed timelines, and doomed timelines happen only within game sessions. Only players can initiate them.

Ah. But the Condesce was created as a player once, was she not?

MEENAH: how aboat we make a different deal mermaid

DAMARA: 「ハンドメイド」。

MEENAH: yeah shore fine)(ANDMAID

MEENAH: whatebber

MEENAH: so tell me water you usin that lets you swim amok all over my empire huh

MEENAH: rust blood like you shoald have died ages ago

MEENAH: do you have some kind of immortality

MEENAH: or time travel

MEENAH: or what

DAMARA: . . . どちらも。

MEENAH: you got BOT) (

MEENAH:) (A

MEENAH: this is the first good news ive had in over six centuries

MEENAH: so listen up redfish

MEENAH: you dont rule everyfin as long as i have without learnin a thing or tuna about the metaphysical properties a spacetime

MEENAH: closed time loops and branchin timelines and whatnaut

MEENAH: and rumors of a few heavy hitters that havent swam into town yet but are already here

MEENAH: you capisce

DAMARA: . . . はい。私は「カピス」する。

MEENAH: i thought you might

MEENAH: am i mistaken oar do i detect a hint of resentment there

DAMARA: 少し。

MEENAH: heh

MEENAH: so the way i understand it is this pirate motherfucker can only sail into town when the tides right

DAMARA: 何。

MEENAH: i M-EAN when the right conditions are met

MEENAH: youve been goin up and down the river a history knockin down dams and diggin canals makin sure its the right shape to welcome waterver dumb oversized ship is big enough to carry his ego

DAMARA:

MEENAH: you shut your mouth i can tell youre about to say somefin rude about my dumb oversized ship

MEENAH: but listen heres the thing

MEENAH: if youre here to smooth out this river to fit his ships big aft then that means he cant get into any tributaries what diverge from that route

MEENAH: aint that right

DAMARA: 多分。

MEENAH: maybe is good enough for me

MEENAH: so what say you and me get off this timestream and onto one a those smaller tributaries

MEENAH: all you gotta do is use your little time powers to find me sometime before glubbyglub croaks and gimme somefin different to do thatll throw off his big plan

DAMARA: それは不可能だ。履歴を変更すると、失敗したタイムラインが作成されます。

MEENAH: fshhh what do i care about creatin a doomed timeline

MEENAH: my empires D---EAD

MEENAH: if this is the NOT doomed timeline how bad can the doomed ones be

MEENAH: besides im a shellfish beach

MEENAH: if this green pirate lookin freak ive heard about is gonna take my whole empire from me as part of his big plan then maybe i wanna glub up this universe he wants so bad

MEENAH: and i shore as shell dont plan to be his next slave

MEENAH: how boat you redfish

MEENAH: are you feelin shellfish too

DAMARA: . . . はい。

MEENAH: good

MEENAH: sea you in the past

And with that, the witch vanishes into history, her fated fight with her would-be successor unfought, and in losing her chance at freedom from her master's slavery she gains a wholly new form of freedom. It would seem I didn't raise her quite firmly enough. At least not firmly enough for her brainwashing to remain an immovable object in the face of the unstoppable force of the Condesce's persuasive personality.

It would seem that the Condesce's long and tight reign on Alternia is due to more than her long and tight rein on Gl'bgolyb.

###

Your name is FEFERI PEIXES, and today is your WRIGGLING DAY. Today, you have turned six sweeps old.

You don't think you're going to live to see your seventh.

In your earliest memories, through tender delirious nightmares G'lbgoiyb whispered promises to you of a coming battle. Older sea dweller kids mentioned your fate—sometimes nervously when they found you intimidating, sometimes mockingly when they didn't think you were so tough at all. Since you were too small to wield a 2x3dent, or even a 1x3dent, back when you were glubbing around the sea with a mere 1/2x3dent clutched in your pudgy little hands, you have known that someday you would be fighting Her Imperious Condescension both for your crown and for your life.

You've been preparing for that fight since you were old enough to prepare.

But you didn't expect the fight to come so soon. And you didn't expect the fight to come to you.

And yet, here she is: the CONDESCEND herself, just off the shore of your moirail's hive. You fled there when G'lbgoiyb warned you that something had changed and she was coming. After all, Eridan is the only one who swore he would fight alongside you when the time came. He's beside you now, his rifle clutched in his hands as your 2x3dent is clutched in yours. You'd like

to be poised for battle, but you're not. You're clutching your 2x3dent not like a weapon but like a barrier, as if you could hope to parry the Condesce's attack. From the corner of your eye, you can see that Eridan is holding his rifle the same way. The two of you have no hope.

She's standing atop her bright red ship, her own 2x3dent in her hand like a scepter, her long hair whipping behind her in the wind. You have seen her wicked grin a thousand times in your dreams.

You didn't expect her bright red ship to be so small, nor for the Condesce's trident-like imperial logo to instead be replaced by her personal symbol. Nor did you expect for the Condesce's long hair to be braided into two long thick ponytails. Maybe this is how the Condesce always dresses to challenge an imminently executed heiress.

Without a word of greeting, she jumps off her ship and down to the beach. Your moirail automatically flinches a step back and swings around to point his rifle at her. He must have a little less no hope than you.

But because of that, you're sure that she'll kill him first. Her gaze has already focused on him completely. Eridan agreed to fight alongside you, but not like this. Not when there's no chance the two of you can win. All the Condesce wants is you. There's no reason he should die, too. You brace yourself, bending

your knees, ready to charge in between them if she moves for him.

But she doesn't.

MEENAH: heh

MEENAH: oh youre reel cute

It isn't the reaction either of you expected.

MEENAH: okay shore you can come too

ERIDAN: uh

ERIDAN: come wwhere exactly

MEENAH: hold your seahorses im gettin to that part

And then her gaze is turned on you.

MEENAH: hey lil cuttlefish

MEENAH: were goin on a road trip

###

MEENAH: so here i am mindin my own business right

ERIDAN: right

MEENAH: when this lowblood beach teleports hershellf into my throne room

ERIDAN: wwoww

MEENAH: i know right

MEENAH: and not just any lowblood like

MEENAH: shes as rusty as it gets

While the Condesce regales your moirail with the story of why, exactly, she's chosen to bring the two of you onto her ship, you're exploring her den. She has a huge desk with the fanciest computer you've ever seen, decorative pots and jugs full of caegars,

gleaming golden 2x3dents over the doors, and—to your puzzlement—rows of framed fabric squares covered with patches and pins, mainly from different bands. Apparently she's into punk music and subjugglator rap. You think you see a few logos associated with anarchist groups mixed in. The subjugglator rap makes sense, but music that's mainly about Fighting The Power seems like a really weird thing for The Power to have an interest in. You suppose you know very little about your ancestor outside of her public persona and the fact that she kills anyone else with your blood color.

Even the collection of patches is set into frames that look like they're made from solid gold. Your ancestor's quarters are as opulent as you'd ever imagined—in terms of quality. In terms of quantity, though, the space is somewhat... lacking. At least for what you would have expected out of the ruler of the entire empire.

You're more sure than ever that this isn't her flagship. But you don't know what that means.

MEENAH: but i know exactly who this beach is

MEENAH: lil terrorist thats been giving me ship
for MILL-ENNIA

ERIDAN: oh shit

ERIDAN: wwait howws that possible

ERIDAN: i mean if shes JUST a rust blood

MEENAH: yeah -EXACTLY

MEENAH: thats what i wanna know

MEENAH: so she gives me this story about bein
some time traveler from the future who struck a deal
with me and this is what she says

MEENAH: she says the world is going to end

ERIDAN: oh shit seariously

MEENAH: yeah S-EARIOUSLY

MEENAH: in just a few perigees too

ERIDAN: wwwhat

ERIDAN: fuck that sucks

ERIDAN: is there any wway to stop it

MEENAH: there shore is

MEENAH: and its

MEENAH: kidnapping)(-ER

You stop exploring the room as you sense both the
Condesce's and Eridan's full attention turn on you

FEFERI: Um...

FEFERI: Really? W)(y?

MEENAH: eh some game you and your friends were
gonna play

MEENAH: theres actually like twelve of you so i
coulda kidnapped like

MEENAH: any of you

MEENAH: or just killed you i guess

MEENAH: except for rust beachs descendant shes
already dead apparently

ERIDAN: oh glub i think i know her hey fef you
know that chick vvris keelhauled

FEFERI: O) (! Yea) (, kinda? You knew) (er betta.

FEFERI: I didnt know s) (e could time travel! 380

MEENAH: yeah go figure huh

MEENAH: so anyway as long as any one of you cant
play the game the world aint gonna die

MEENAH: and more importantly

MEENAH: some other jackass time travelin
motherglubbins shitheel doesnt get a shot at making me
his beach

MEENAH:) (A

MEENAH: so yeah im abdicatin and takin you with
me

FEFERI: Wait.

ERIDAN: wwhat

MEENAH: empires saved and i get to go do somefin
else for a whale

FEFERI: Wait youre ABDICATING T) (-E T) (RON-----E?
380

ERIDAN: yeah hold on does that mean that like

ERIDAN: fef is in charge noww or

MEENAH:) (A) (

MEENAH: no

MEENAH: nah get this my helmsman is immortal
right

MEENAH: so i just sorta

MEENAH: let him out and went hey dude you must be
reel abalonly stuck up in my engine

MEENAH: how boat i give ya run of the whole ship

ERIDAN: WWHAT

ERIDAN: you put a LOWWBLOOD in charge a the empire

MEENAH:)(A)(A)(A i know right shits cray

MEENAH: its gonna be finny

FEFERI: But...

FEFERI: I mean Im naut complaining I guess

Is this not, after all, what you fought for? The equality of lowbloods and highbloods? A chance for the bottom of the hemospectrum to be treated as well as the top? This should be good.

Except you didn't fight for it at all. Your ancestor just went ahead and did it. Your ancestor whom you assumed you'd have to fight—whom you assumed would sooner die than relinquish her power, to you or anyone else.

Now, suddenly, everything you thought you'd have to spend your whole life struggling to achieve is done, and you didn't have to do anything at all.

FEFERI: I t)(ink I s)(oald sit down.

MEENAH: check out that couch over there its reel cushy

ERIDAN: lemme see

ERIDAN: ooh

ERIDAN: yeah

You don't think this sudden shift in Alternia's social and political future is emotionally affecting your moirail quite as much as it is you. For some

reason, that leaves you miffed. He said he was going to fight the Condesce alongside you. It's his future that's suddenly changed, too.

But you guess he never really was as invested in the whole saving-the-lowbloods thing.

FEFERI: So...

FEFERI: W) (at now?

FEFERI: Now that youve fis) (napped us.

MEENAH: FIS) (NAPP---ED thats so lame

MEENAH: but cute

MEENAH: but uh iunno

MEENAH: which is GREAT

MEENAH: this is the first time ive reely not known what i was gonna do since

MEENAH: like

MEENAH: i was your age probubbly

MEENAH: how old are you

FEFERI: Six.

MEENAH: hahaha wow i thought you were like four

MEENAH: anyway i forgot how much i missed this

MEENAH: no rules just C) (AOS

MEENAH: i wouldnt say bein clampletely off the hook is betta than bein the -EMPR-ESS OF ALT-ERNIA but theres naut a lot of freedom when youre runnin an empire yknow

MEENAH: you can do whatever you want boat if what you want is for your trillions a subjugated subjects to NAUT die it kinda puts some practical limitations

on what you can actually do

MEENAH: gotta worry about like

MEENAH: taxes

ERIDAN: i mean i guess taxes are important

MEENAH: yeah and like collectin taxes is great
and all but can you imagine anyfin more borin than
deciding where to allocate tax roevenue so that a
bunch a trolls dont starve

The Condesce looks at you when she asks the
question. You're with Eridan—that does sound
important, what could be more important than making
sure the trolls underneath your protection get enough
to eat?—but, trying to think about actually looking at
long pages of numbers and... what, writing a bunch of
notes about which planets they should be sent to or
something? You really can't imagine anything more
boring than that. You shake your head.

The Condesce grins and pats you on the head
between your horns.

MEENAH: youre okay kid

MEENAH: i think whale get along just fine

MEENAH: where do you wanna go

FEFERI: W) (at?

ERIDAN: wwwhat

MEENAH: well obviously i dont have any plans here

MEENAH: and im feelin like

MEENAH: this trip needs to kick off with some
peak chaos

MEENAH: whats more chaotic than lettin a six sweep old punkass wriggler decide our travel itinerary

FEFERI: Um

FEFERI: Well...

You have to put some thought in that. Whenever you thought about your future, you imagined it would either be cut short on the end of your ancestor's 2x3dent, or that you would split time between your new flagship and Alternia, where you wanted to re-centralize the government. You put very little thought into the many other worlds scattered across the empire that you could potentially visit.

FEFERI: W)(at if we just pick a planet at random and go sea)(ow everybodys doing t)(ere? 38)

MEENAH: what

FEFERI: You know!

FEFERI: Just glub with t)(em for a w)(ale!

MEENAH: glub at W)(O

FEFERI: Anemoneone we run into! 38)

FEFERI: Sea if t)(eyre)(APPY!

MEENAH: thats so DUMB

MEENAH: i love it

FEFERI: Reely?

MEENAH: yeah you got it

She's already turned on a digital star chart and projected it across the room. It takes up an entire wall and a good chunk of the floor and ceiling.

MEENAH: i mean can you imagine some brown bloods

lookin up and theres the big bad waterbitch all like

MEENAH:)(-EY)(OW YA DOIN are ya havin a good time here in my empire

MEENAH: their nooks are gonna pucker shut out a terror

She picks up her 2x3dent where she lay it next to her desk, backs as far from the star chart as she can, covers her eyes with one hand, and with the other prepares to lob the trident at the chart.

MEENAH: one random planet comin right up
Maybe this weird new future you've stumbled into won't be so bad.



Beachgoers
LunarTide
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Sweaty Clumsy Adolescent Gets Unusually Introspective

Every caste has its own unique capabilities.

Telekinesis. Communion with Gl'bgolyb. Mind control. Command over animals. Immunity to sunlight.

An affinity for delicate weaponry and machinery—the thin wires of a robot, the thin wires of a crossbow.

You have strength. Sheer, raw physical strength.

That's not the talent of any caste. So what are you?

###

You have heard of mutants. You don't know a lot—just that sometimes they happen. If you're a mutant, it means that something's gone wrong in your blood. It means you might have strange powers, or no powers. It means you have no proper place in the glorious Alternian Empire.

You try harder to learn how to wield a bow and arrow. You snap the bow again.

You have heard that mutants are identifiable by the hue of their blood—if you're a mutant, your color is wrong, unnatural, something no troll should ever have.

Your blood looks fine. Your sweat, soaking everything you own, is the correct hue. So what are you?

Is it possible to be a mutant mutant?

###

You were born with this power. It's so natural to you that sometimes you don't understand how other people don't share it.

Sometimes you find yourself thinking that your friends are being lazy when they gripe about something like unsuccessfully struggling to move their furniture, even though when you stop and think about it you know that can't be the case. For you, trying not to accidentally move furniture around is a bigger challenge than moving it on purpose—so, if your friends did have your strength, how could forcibly restraining themselves from doing something effortless be laziness when it takes more work to not do it than it does to do it? So they must be telling the truth when they say they can't do it.

And yet you find yourself thinking like that sometimes anyway. You find it difficult to grasp the kind of powerlessness that you're incapable of experiencing. By your very birthright you can't imagine navigating a world without power that comes to you so effortlessly you couldn't stop having it if you tried.

Maybe there's a metaphor in this somewhere.

###

Everything comes easily for you.

Most people have to work for their strength. They

struggle to achieve physical power, having to work out for hours and hours to reach the kind of strength that you've achieved effortlessly. You've never had to exercise.

Sometimes you stand in front of the mirror and flex your soft thin arms, wishing desperately that the muscles would pull taut, that you could have the kind of rippling bulging biceps that would demonstrate your strength. You don't. Of course you don't. You're no body builder—you've never had to work for your strength. It simply is.

You don't know how you'd start to build up your physique even if you wanted to. What good would push-ups do you when you can already effortlessly lift objects that weigh many times more than you do? What good would pull-ups do when your very grip would crush and bend the metal bar as you pulled yourself up? You can pick up any barbell and toss it like a boomerang if you want. How could you possibly build your strength—lifting mountains? The process of detaching a mountain from the ground so it can be lifted sounds like the real challenge here.

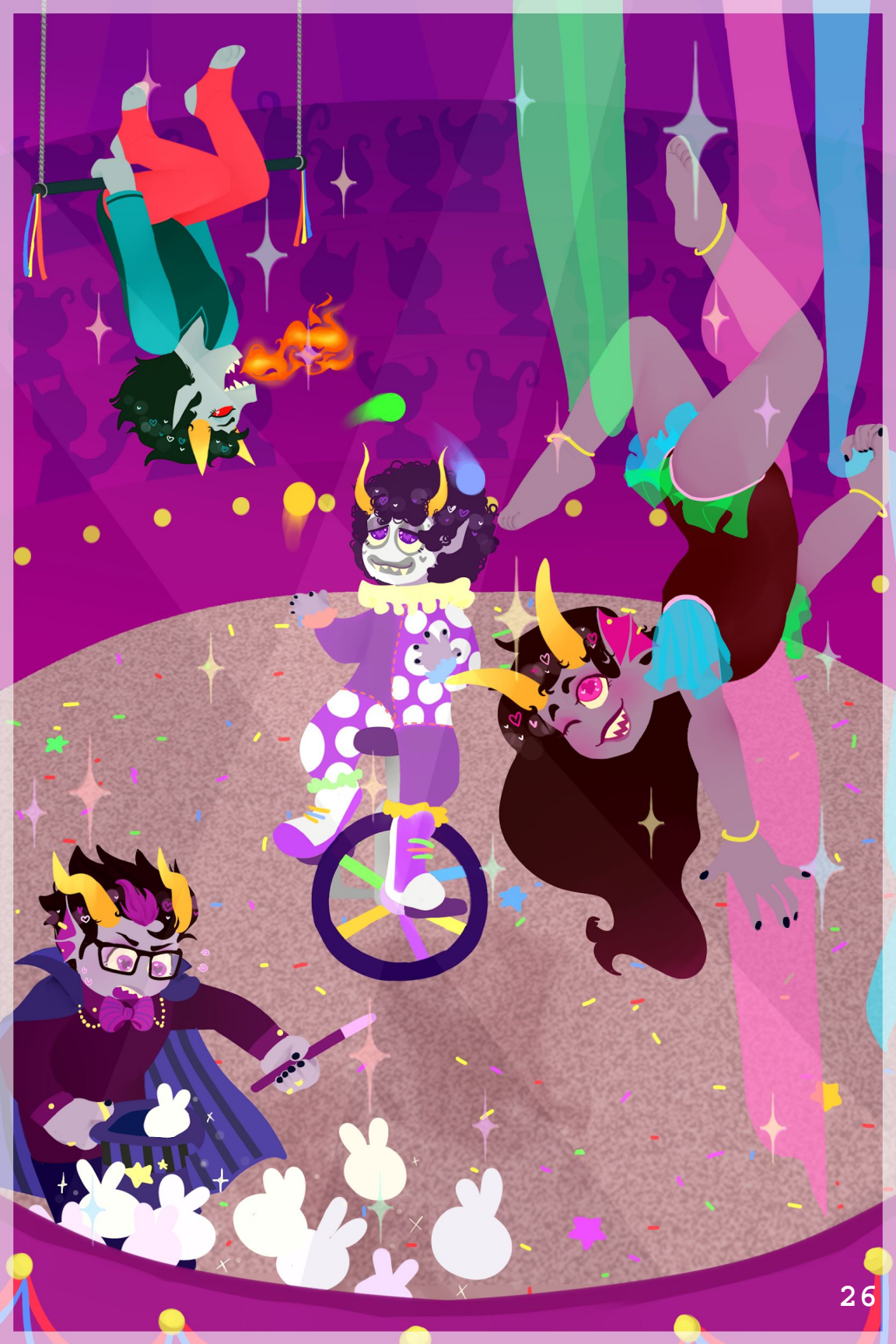
And besides, you don't really want to be more strong. You're already so strong you don't know what to do with your strength. Everything shatters in your hands. Everything's crushed under your fingertips. Your room looks like an angry wild animal was locked inside and tried to escape; everything you own is

torn, broken, destroyed, scattered in parts across the floor. The only way you get to keep anything is by not touching it.

You wish you had the capacity to be gentle. You don't.

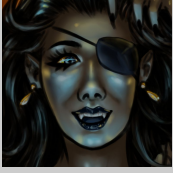
Some days you can hardly eat because you can't hold the metal utensils to eat without slowly bending them, and when you've snapped a third fork in half you'd rather give up in frustration than eat with your hands like an uncultured brute. Anyway, if you tried, you'd just crush the food in your hands and make a mess of everything.

Nothing comes easily for you.





Credits

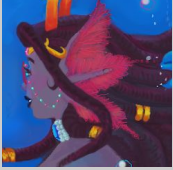


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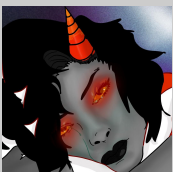
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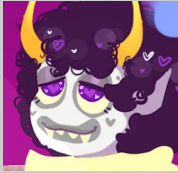
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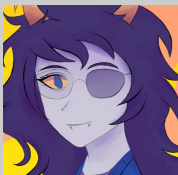
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